SUBJECTS.

47. *Insufficiency of the salt supply in Kooduchandrams.*

Mr. P. N. Madhavan Pillai (Member, Vaikam Taluk) referred to the difficulties experienced by merchants and petty traders going from distant places to buy salt from the godowns, owing to the delay in the issue of the article. To recoup the expenses of delay in getting salt, the shopmen increase the sale price to the detriment of the buying population. Further, the traders who went in for a number of sacks were often compelled to come away with one or two. This and the variations in the weight of the sacks have resulted not only in the increased price of salt in the market, but have also made this every-day necessity scarce. He attributed the hardships the people were being put to, to the want of proper supervision on the part of the higher authorities of the department concerned.

Dewan's reply.—The attention of the Excise Commissioner will be drawn to the complaints which the member has made. If specific instances are brought to notice, Government are prepared to enquire into them and punish the subordinates at fault. Ordinarily, people must complain to the local officers and, if they do not get redress there, should then go to the higher authorities.

48. *Abolition of the system of bonding tobacco.*

Mr. Mathan Ippe (Member, Muvattupuzha Taluk) spoke of the excessive *mel-labhom* on tobacco and of the smuggling of the article from Cochin on account of its low price there, in spite of the exertions of the frontier Excise officers. This led to reduction in the consumption of the *mel-labhom* tobacco and increase in that of the smuggled one. Both the Government and the people lost thereby. He requested that the existing system might be abolished and the contract system introduced as in Cochin.

Dewan's reply.—If the system is changed, Government will lose a very large amount of revenue. Government are not prepared for that.

49. *Liquor shops adjoining estates.*

Mr. F. W. LeFeuvre (Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association) said that he believed the subject was being considered by Government, and that his Association would be grateful, if Government could give them some assurance that, in future, no new liquor shops would be put up in the vicinity of estates in the planting districts without some previous reference to the District Association. Those liquor shops on estate boundaries were very detrimental to the interests of the proprietors of the estates, and still more so, to the interests of the estate labourers

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